



Topics of the Hour in the Baseball World



Orval Overall's Pitching Career—Spokane's Jap Team—Hans Wagner's Advice on Base Running

NOT all professional baseball players were poor boys who began to play the game in the back lots and gradually worked up to the top. We are familiar with the college men who have made good in the money making end of the game, and then there are other players not from colleges who had plenty of money to start life with, but who took up baseball merely because they wanted to, not because they could not do anything else that would bring them in as much money.

Orval Overall, the big pitcher who joined the Chicago Nationals after leaving Cincinnati, is a player of the latter class. He is the son of a very wealthy Californian, living in the

northern part of the state, and Orvie is himself owner of an orange orchard valued at over \$100,000.

"The old man," says Orvie, "wants me to retire from the game, and some day I suppose I'll have to give in to him, particularly if my arm should go back on me."

Overall does not allow his wealth to influence his playing or mode of living. He works as hard and as conscientiously as the most ambitious substitute who is trying to supplant some regular member of a team.

How Chance Instructed Overall.

Overall did poor work with Cincinnati and was practically "made" by Captain Frank Chance of the Chicago

Nationals. Chance taught Orvie how to field his position, how to cover first base when the first sacker was drawn away from the bag by an infield hit or a bunt and how to control his then wide and wild shots. Yes, Orvie owes Chance a big debt for remedying those three faults. Also Chance made him drop pitching his favorite underhand ball and made him throw overhand all the time, thus increasing Orvie's speed.

Overall pitched his first professional game for the Fresno (Cal.) club against Oakland, in the Pacific Coast league. He defeated the Commuters, as the Oaklanders were called, by 4 to 0. Some people call him "a second Amos Rusie," others "The Christy Mathewson of the west," and many of his intimates call him "Big Jeff," because he is as big and as strong as Jim Jeffries.

Spokane's Jap Ball Team.

It is interesting to note that Spokane, Wash., has an all Japanese team of baseball players. The Japs show rare ability to pick up American pastimes and American dollars.

The club is known as the Keis Gijiku club, the captain and manager being Y. K. Nakamura, secretary of the Japanese Association of the Island Empire. Among the players are eight former members of the Washeda (Japan) university team, which while on a visit to the Pacific coast last season played a series of fast games against teams from Stanford, the University of Oregon and the Multnomah (Portland, Ore.) Athletic club, losing by such scores as 2 to 1, 3 to 2 and 4 to 1.

How Players Improve Equipment.

Many baseball players are not satisfied with the gloves, bats and other paraphernalia supplied by the leading manufacturers, but are continually altering their equipment to suit their own individual tastes. Some plane down the handles of their bats; others wrap the handles with cord or tape, to make them thicker. In the past some players have been known to hollow out the thick ends of their bats and fill the cavities with lead or iron, claiming that the added weight enabled them to send the ball farther.

Rube Waddell, the Philadelphia pitcher, has a thick pad sewed on the lower edge of his fielding glove, the little finger edge, and this pad enables him to cover just a little bit more ground when stopping drives through his territory, and also is a better protection to his hand. Other players take the padding out of the middle of the palms of their gloves, leaving only the thin leather covering as a protection to the middle of the palm of the hand. They claim that they can grip the ball better through this arrangement and that balls naturally fit into the hollow thus formed, enabling them



HARRY STEINFELDT, GREAT BATTING THIRD BASEMAN, CHICAGO NATIONALS.

to make one-hand catches and stops much easier than with ordinary gloves. Probably a still better idea would be to have a pad soaked in glue held in the palm of the glove. That would be a big aid to some players. How about it?

Wagner's Pointers on Base Running.

Hans Wagner, the veteran Pittsburgh shortstop, has the following to say about base running and base stealing: "Your first class baseball team of the future will be made up of three prin-

cipal features—hard hitting, good pitching and fast base running. By fast base running I mean a standard above that which has existed in the big league for some time.

"You will find that the best batters are usually good base runners, and the reason is obvious—the base running helps the batter's average out by making hits where other plays would score merely infield outs on the same sort of tap.

"It is not the man who has stolen most bases that is the best base run-

ner. It is the man who uses his mind and head to help his feet get him around the bags for a score, whether it be stolen bases or not. A good base runner is just as much the man who is able to get a quick start from the plate and beat out an infield hit as is the one who steals third base. The man who does his share of a play with the batter toward getting down to second is also a good batter. Many good base stealers will sacrifice the best interest of the team to get credit for a pilfered cushion or to make a dashing play, but a good base runner does these things only when it serves the best interest of his side.

"Base running is not base stealing and don't get the pair mixed. It is true that most base stealers are good base runners, for the reason that in professional circles the team play is highly developed and the individual is lost in the effort to help out the club. But in semiprofessional and amateur circles, whence comes the talent which ultimately will go to make the major leagues, much loose work is witnessed on the bases. Men will go down without the least notion of a reason for it and will sacrifice the batter and the team for nothing. A base steal should be resorted to only when circumstances strongly indicate it as the best play.

"I can't tell you when to steal and when not to, because the conditions of each game are different. In general, however, base stealing should only be indulged in freely when the enemy's team is on the run and your own side several points to the good. Base stealing under such conditions serves to demoralize the enemy."

CHARLES E. EDWARDS.

LIVING PROVIDENCE VETERANS.

Charlie Bassett is "one of the finest" in Pawtucket, R. I. He was captain of the police baseball team last summer and pitched the ball in the same old way as he did in 1884. Center Fielder Paul Hines, the heavy hitter that year, is running his cigar stand at Washington. Barney Gilligan, the plucky little catcher, was last heard from in Cambridge, Mass., and sends time to size up the material on the clubs around Boston. Ned Allen, the president of the 1884 Grays, is still living in Providence and says he has the banner won by the Grays that season safely tucked away in his cellar.—Providence Journal.

THE ST. LOUIS CARDINALS.

Manager McCheskey is continually shifting the infield of the St. Louis Nationals, but has not yet struck a winning combination. The only player who is reaping any honors is Byrne, the little third baseman. The youngster has been slugging the ball in every game and is holding up his end in the fielding game.



COURTLAND SMITH, THE BEST KNOWN "GENTLEMAN JOCKEY" IN THE EAST.

Courtland Smith is probably the ablest of the group of eastern gentleman jockeys. He is a member of an exclusive society colony and has competed in many big turf events, both steeplechases and flat races. He is riding this season in excellent fashion.

Amusing Stories About Stage Notables and Stage Doings

[From Our New York Dramatic Correspondent.]

MANY are the stories told of Raymond Hitchcock, the comedian, who will go on tour during the season of 1907-08 in "The Yankee Tourist." The latest is to the following effect: During the last season Hitchcock was in a large eastern city and desired to reach

"Well," said Hitchcock, "I'll go out with you."

"Come along," assented the physician, and into the machine jumped the comedy star.

On arriving at the clubhouse Hitchcock hopped gayly out of the auto and said:

"All right, doctor, you needn't come inside, but what's your charge?"

charge to bring me out. Their price is \$10 and \$12, you know. By-by, doctor."

Commercial Life as Seen on the Stage.

One of the stories now being told in the vaudeville houses by monologists is, in the main, as follows: A shrewd but tricky merchant was about to make an assignment for the benefit of creditors. To one creditor he said, "I will make you my preferred creditor so that you will have the best chance to get the amount of your bill, but I want \$50 cash before I do this." The creditor agreed and paid the money. Later the merchant assigned without

needless to say that his house is always well filled. One of the recent productions has chiefly to do with a man who has lost an arm in a railroad wreck. A few days later he is sitting up in bed and watching a pet dog chewing on something. Part of this substance glitters, and on investigation it is discovered that the pup is chewing on a human finger, and on the finger is the seal ring of the maimed man, a ring that he wore when he lost his arm and hand in the railroad wreck!

Is it any wonder that some Parisians yawn when they visit America and

a most discouraging number of cases. The persecution that in England formerly fell principally to American jockeys, horse owners and athletes of certain classes seems now to have been transferred, in part, at least, to American producers and players of drama.

delicate British critics go to smash practically unannounced. We all know what effect acute indigestion has on the writings of dramatic critics. Charles Frohman and George Tyler seem to be the only American managers that can depend on getting fair treatment for most of their plays from



MARIE LOHR AS BEATRICE IN "MY WIFE," HAYMARKET THEATER, LONDON.

a certain country club located on the city's outskirts. Hitchcock, it is related, called on a well known physician and stated that the doctor's services were badly needed at the club in question.

"Why—er—um— I charge \$4 a visit, but I haven't seen the sick man," the physician spluttered rather confusedly.

"Here's your four, and there isn't any sick man. I merely knew you would ride out here to make a call for far less money than any cab driver would



GERTRUDE MILLAR IN "THE GIRLS OF GOTTENBERG," GAIETY THEATER, LONDON.

any preference at all. "You won't get anything," he said to the indignant creditor.

"But I thought I was to be the preferred creditor?"

"You are the preferred creditor. I tell you now you don't get any money. The other creditors have got to wait thirty days before they find out they don't get anything."

One Type of Parisian Plays.

In Paris there is a theater devoted entirely to the production of melodramatic horrors. The manager will pay almost any price for a play that will terrify or shock the audience.

London Critics Versus Americans. More than likely the production of American plays in England by American companies will not be indulged in so frequently in future as in the near past. The American manager, player and playwright seems to win the undying enmity of the British critics in

It affords some balm to London's critics, it appears, to see American plays presented by companies made up exclusively of English players. But when American players as a rule dare to appear before Londoners, in London, in a native American play, the delicate digestions of the oft-times in-



KYRLE BELLEW, WHO WILL APPEAR IN NEW PLAY BY PAUL ARMSTRONG.

John Bull's stage scribes, to say nothing of the gallery gods.

Richard Mansfield will not act the coming season, but will take a long rest.

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